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MARY SIMMS FURMAN LEAVES GENEROUS LEGACY

WHEN FURMAN AWARDED Mary Simms Oliphant Furman an honorary Doctor of Humanities degree in 2007, it recognized her as a "dignified and intellectually vibrant woman" who demonstrated "a lifelong love of learning, and a lifelong generosity to her community and her alma mater." With her husband Alester G. Furman III, a member of the university's founding family, she contributed much toward the betterment of the school and the community.

When she died January 22 in Greenville, she left an extensive educational, civic and cultural legacy.

She was the great-granddaughter of William Gilmore Simms, the South's leading antebellum poet, novelist and historian. She and her mother, Mary Simms Oliphant, were co-authors of several editions of *The History of South Carolina* and *South Carolina: From the Mountains to the Sea*, textbooks used by generations of students in the state.

Mrs. Furman was influential in developing Greenville's first arts festival and worked on a number of local restoration projects. She was active in the Carolina Foothills



Garden Club and the Junior League, serving both as president, and with her husband provided generous support to the South Carolina Governor's School for the Arts and Humanities, the Upcountry History Museum, the S.C. Nature Conservancy and Greenville's Peace Center for the Performing Arts. She was a member of the Tuesday Study Club, the *Cercle Franco Américain*, the Debutante Club of Greenville, the Assembly and the Quadrille.

She attended Greenville Woman's College for two years in the late 1930s, then studied for a year at the Sorbonne in Paris before earning a bachelor's degree from the University of South Carolina. She later received a master's in French literature from the University of North Carolina, where she performed with the Martha Graham Dance Company.

She helped plan and design several Furman buildings, including Daniel Chapel and Earle Infirmary. Furman Mall, the main campus thoroughfare, is named for her and her husband. Their four daughters established a scholarship in their honor at the university.

In addition to her daughters, Mrs. Furman is survived by five grandchildren, two step-grandchildren, four great-grandchildren and one step great-grandchild.

Memorials: Mary Simms Oliphant and Alester Garden Furman III Scholarship at Furman; Christ Church Episcopal, 10 N. Church St., Greenville 29601; or a charity of one's choice.

Connie Purser Stalnaker '49, September 17, Abbeville, S.C. She held various office positions in the Abbeville area and retired from the Milliken-Sharon Plant.

Percy Frank Walters '49, November 9, Monroe, N.C. He graduated from the Baltimore School of Dental Surgery and won the Dr. Kelsey Award for professional demeanor. He was a member of the Gorgas Odontological Honorary Society, Psi Omega fraternity, and the Phi Chapter of Omicron Kappa Upsilon, a national honorary dental society. After working as a dentist in the U.S. Navy and supporting the Marines in Korea and Japan, he began his private practice in Monroe in 1955 and became known as the "gentle dentist" to local families. He continued to practice dentistry into 2012. He was president of the Optimist Club, the Cancer Society and the Friends of Union County Library. In 2005 he published a novel, *Scott's Ark*.

Hazel Gaddy Bumgarner '50, October 18, Tallahassee, Fla. She earned a master's degree from Arizona State University and was a teacher and librarian in public schools in North Carolina, Nevada and Arizona. For several years she was an adjunct faculty member in library science at Western Carolina University. She also taught at the University of South Carolina.

Landrum H. Fowler '50, February 26, 2012, North Augusta, S.C. He was a Baptist minister who served churches in Thomson and Langley, S.C. He was also secretary for the Kilpatrick Baptist Association for many years. He was a Navy veteran of World War II, having served in the Pacific Theater.

Robert I. Miller '50, November 22, Greenville. He was a veteran of the U.S. Army Air Corps and the U.S. Merchant Marines. After his military service he was a co-founder of and partner in AAA Supply Company. He was a former president of the Pleasantburg Sertoma Club and was an avid tennis player and hiker.

Blossom Craft Burgamy '51, October 1, Macon, Ga. She studied voice at the Juilliard School and performed as an opera singer in New York. She went on to teach music in Bibb County (Ga.) schools for more than 27 years. She was a regent of the Mary Hammond Washington Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution.

Syderas Ross Sanders '51, September 30, Elgin, S.C. She was for many years an educator in Greer, S.C., and in Elgin. She was a gifted musician and served as organist at Blaney Baptist Church.

William C. League '52, October 29, Fairfax, Va. He earned a Master of Divinity degree from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and a Master of Arts degree from Pepperdine University, then served 22 years as a chaplain in the U.S. Navy, 20 of those on assignments with the U.S. Marine Corps. Upon retiring from the Navy he practiced real estate in North Carolina and taught real estate for 18 years in Northern Virginia.

Paul M. Pridgen, Jr. '53, October 28, Chapin, S.C. He graduated from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary and was ordained to the ministry at First Baptist Church of North Charleston, S.C., in 1951. He was a fourth-generation Baptist minister and served churches and institutions in the Carolinas. In 1962 he succeeded his father as pastor of First Baptist Church of North Charleston. Together they served the church for 62 consecutive years. He was a strong advocate for religious liberty and the separation of church and state and worked to build bridges of understanding across race, religion, class and gender. He was awarded an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree from the Baptist College of Charleston (now Charleston Southern University) in recognition of his leadership and ministry in the church and community.

Mary Gage Hammond Dobbins '54, November 15, Greenville. She was retired from Gage's gift store.